

**SUMMARY OF THE
PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 23, 1998**

The Program Policy and Structure Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Committee (NELAC) met by teleconference Wednesday, September 23, 1998, at 11 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). The meeting was led by its chair, Dr. Pauline Bouchard of the Minnesota Department of Health. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the new committee members and discuss upcoming committee discussion topics.*

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Ms. Bouchard introduced the new committee members, Dr. Paul Kimsey of the California Department of Health Services, and Ms. Ann Rosecrance of Core Laboratories. Ms. Rosecrance was unable to participate in the teleconference.

OTHER ISSUES

Ms. Bouchard announced that Dr. Abhil-Mehdi Ali has resigned from the committee. As a result, the private sector would lose a Committee representative. A suggestion was made as to a possible replacement and Ms. Bouchard will send out the nomination form.

The next issue was regarding the NELAC Glossary. This issue has not been addressed since it was edited last spring by Mr. Jerry Parr, a former committee member. The committee decided that the glossary needs a single term/definition for each word for consistency. The goal is to complete the glossary this fall, circulate it to the committee chairs for input, and post it on the NELAC Website before the Interim Meeting. The committee discussed tentative arrangements for who might work on this project.

Agricultural Laboratories

The next item of discussion was regarding agricultural laboratories and their role in NELAC. Dr. Kimsey requested background information on this issue. The following paragraph is a synopsis of the conversation.

Agricultural laboratories do environmental testing but their procedures are very different from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) procedures. Agricultural laboratories have stated in the past that they should not have to be NELAC accredited because they follow Good Laboratory Practices (GLPs). The Committee feels that they use other tests that are not covered under GLPs and that these tests should fall under NELAC oversight. This is clear in some states, but not on a national level. In the past, state representatives of NELAC have raised this issue, but EPA has not raised this issue to date. Ms. Bouchard mentioned the need of establishing a subcommittee for resolution of this issue. Dr. Kimsey mentioned his interest in participating on the subcommittee, due to the large

number of the agricultural laboratories in California, and the impact of agriculture on the state. There also has been concern expressed in the past that the agricultural laboratories will exempt their laboratories from NELAC oversight completely.

Ms. Bouchard mentioned the Transition Committee's efforts in preparing a Scope of Accreditation. Mr. Perry Brake of Washington State offered to prepare and present a draft to the Program Policy and Structure Committee for review.

Ms. Bouchard reminded committee members that they must publicize any changes to the Constitution and Bylaws before the Interim Meeting.

Ms. Bouchard also asked about committee members' access to EPA Bulletin Boards and the Internet. In the future, she will forward a list of EPA's new postings to the committee members, and wants to assure that they can download them.

The Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Board (ELAB) has established a work group to deal with the issue of small laboratories. Therefore, the Program Policy and Structure Committee will await input from ELAB before further addressing this issue. Inquiries regarding small laboratories should be sent to Dr. Evelyn Torres of the Fairfax County Water Authority.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of this committee will be by teleconference on October 7, 1998, at 11 a.m. EDT.

ACTION ITEMS
PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 23, 1998

| Item No. | Action | Date To Be Completed |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Ms. Bouchard will contact the suggested replacement for Dr. Ali to discuss committee membership. | |
| 2. | A subcommittee will be created to address the agricultural laboratories issue. | |
| 3. | Committee members will complete the glossary this fall. It will be distributed to committee chairs for comment, and posted on the NELAC Website prior to the Interim Meeting. | |

PARTICIPANTS
PROGRAM POLICY AND STRUCTURE TELECONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 23, 1998

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|---|---|--|
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